

# IDENTIFICATION OF MAIN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CAUSES OF ROMANIAN MIGRATION

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## Abstract

*The main worldwide determinants influencing in time the migration phenomenon are: external environment (international political situation), economy, population growth in the migrant's country, armed conflicts, religious persecution and xenophobic attacks. The migration of manpower from Romania is based on a number of psychological, social, financial reasons of migrants to increase their income and improve their living conditions in another country. The main cause of migration in developed countries is the migration flows originating mainly from poor or very poor countries considered disadvantaged.*

**Key words:** *economic reasons; social causes, country of origin of migrants; destination country of immigrants.*

**JEL Classification:** D61; F22; J21.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The external migration specific to our country is generally caused by a number of discrepancies in income, living conditions and standard of living that occur between different regions or at the rural – urban level. In this article, we have started from the premise that the migration outflow is based on a series of economic and social causes, which are in turn influenced by a number of determinants (economic, political, cultural, social and religious).

The research undertaken has as main objective to emphasize that migration is most often seen as a last resort for those involved, being increasingly less seen as an investment decision of the individual migrant and his/her family. The purpose of this research focused on the use of open interview is to identify the causes of economic and social Romanian migration.

In order to identify the main economic and social causes of Romanian migration two researches have been performed, namely:

1. A focus group research based on open interview, direct and online, applied to a group of 22 Romanian migrants in the main destination countries - Italy and Spain and from Moldova; namely the counties of Iasi, Bacau and Vrancea.

2. A quantitative research based on a questionnaire applied to a total of 543 respondents from Focsani (Vrancea).

## II. STRUCTURE AND DESIGN OF RESEARCH

The focus group research helps to identify and know better the behavior of the Romanian migrant. It is also aimed to identify perceptions on a number of economic, cultural and social activities that characterize migration as well as a number of decisions made by migrants in the host country.

In this respect, the aim of this research was to identify the main social and economic causes of migration in the case of a small group of Romanian migrants left to work abroad. The size of the group chosen for our research was divided into smaller groups depending on the country chosen (Italy and Spain) and depending on the city or town of origin or the city/town in the host country.

The participants selected for research meet a number of common characteristics: they are Romanian migrants settled in Italy and Spain, have a job considered relatively stable on the labor market in the country of destination, have a qualified experience in migration for several years. Attempts throughout the interviews have been made to avoid judgments or to influence the responses of the chosen group. Throughout the interview, Romanian migrants were able to share their experience of migration into another country.

The target group was divided, for interview purposes, according to the chosen country of destination, but also a small part of their relatives and families were concerned (Romanian migrants left for work in Italy and Spain and the relatives and families of the migrants left for work abroad).

Our research was conducted in Moldova, as the official Romanian statistics shows that most Romanian migrants from Italy and Spain come from this region, in particular Iași, Suceava, Botoșani, Băcău, Neamț, Galați, Vaslui și Vrancea.

### III. THE PUSH & PULL MODEL AND THE CAUSES OF ROMANIAN MIGRATION

The push and pull model was designed by the Worldwide Migration Organization (WMO) and its purpose was to highlight the attraction and rejection factors grounding the decision of the migration behavior.

The push-pull model is supported by the most important determinants grounding the migration phenomenon: economic, social, ethic, cultural and religious factors. The Pull model is focused on the existence of 5 factors of attraction, existing in a country of destination, that pull and, moreover, ground the social and economic causes of the migration phenomenon, the decision to move in another area or region. The Push model is composed of three internal factors existing in the country of origin of the migrant that push him/her in the country of destination. The Push-Pull model is considered subjective, but applicable to a certain profile of migrant or to each type of state as the factors influencing this model has certain particularities (CRISTIAN, Moise and Bărağan, 2013)

In specialized literature, the factors identified as Push & Pull are: economic, demographic, political and social-cultural. These determinants or Push & Pull factors lead migrants from the places and countries of origin to new territories and regions of other countries. The Push & Pull model is essentially a static model and does not mention how migration affects structural, economic and social conditions in the country of destination (Hein de Haas, 2009).

The Push factors are considered are considered factors of rejection and influence future migrants to leave their country of origin and seek new opportunities. The Pull factors are considered factors of attraction for foreign migrants arriving from different countries, making them leave their home country for a period of time.

The Pull factors are those factors of attraction in a certain region, such as: professional opportunities, higher salaries, and a series of facilities (economic, social, professional and better working conditions. The Push type factors are considered stronger and more important in making decisions, unlike the Pull factors (Gursharan, Singh and Kainth, 2009).

Based on the attraction and rejection factors (economic – demographic; political and social-religious-cultural), the following motivations have been highlighted by the focus interviews and which we consider the most representative:

**Table 1 – Economic motivations of the interviewed migrants**

<b>Migrant</b>	<b>Economic affirmations</b>
<b>E. 1.</b>	“I was forced to leave Romania because I was unemployed”.
<b>E. 2.</b>	“The absence of professional opportunities and a decent salary made me migrate”..
<b>E. 3.</b>	“I have a big family at home and nothing to offer them”.
<b>E.5.</b>	“I left to be able to build a better future for my family”.
<b>E.6.</b>	“Financially, it was very difficult for me, I had bank loans.”
<b>E.7.</b>	“I realized that only here I could reach my professional potential for a more than decent salary”
<b>E.8.</b>	“I chose to work abroad for a higher salary. With the salary of a construction worker, one cannot dwell in Romania”.
<b>E.10.</b>	“I couldn’t get by in Romania decently with a nurse salary.”

Source: Personal processing following the research

**Table 2 – Political motivations of interviewed migrants**

<b>Migrant</b>	<b>Political migration</b>
<b>E.1.</b>	“In my opinion, there is too much corruption and bureaucracy in Romania. Everybody is up to staling from the airport, transport, stores, and prices too high...”.
<b>E.2.</b>	“Only bureaucracy: at the passport office, police, etc. The same lazy behavior, the same queues and the same indifference from authorities.”

Source: Personal processing following the research

**Table 3 – Social, religious and cultural motivations of interviewed migrants**

Migrant	Social, religious and cultural affirmations
E.1.	“The Catholic Church and the diaspora helped us a lot. We are united and support and help each other.”
E.2.	”My parents were in Italy for 4 years. After high school, I came here. Now we are a family again.”
E.3.	”We don’t feel alone here. Our niece was already in Italy for 13 years and she called us here.”
E.4.	”My husband had left for work for 2 years. My brothers-in-law were already in Italy, but in a different city. Here distance does not matter. I sometimes don’t feel I’m away from the country”.
E.5.	”The Romanian diaspora from Italy is quite united, of course, there are some exceptions.....”.
E.6.	”My husband was in Spain for several years. I came to him with our two children.”
E.7.	”My sister was in Italy and after a short while I came in the same city. In 5 years, other relatives and siblings came. We are a big family.”

Source: Personal processing following the research

The acceleration of the migration process from Romania has been determined, in particular, by the economic factor, this being a result of the economic-financial development of the countries of destination preferred by Romanians (Italy, Spain, Germany, France, UK).

Romania still has a strong disadvantage as regards regional differences compared to other countries from the EU.

The regions which are considered disadvantaged in our country represent an economic cause of temporary migration. According to our interviews, we can notice that there is some interdependence between the *push & pull factors*: economic-political-social (cultural, religious).

The factors that determined those interviewed to migrate were mainly economic, influenced, in their turn, by political factors. Social factors are a product or result of the decisions made on long term by the interviewed Romanian migrants.

The long-term decisions made by the Romanian migrants left for work abroad highly affect their families, in particular children left home alone or in the care of other family members.

#### IV. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CAUSES OF ROMANIAN MIGRATION

The economic and social causes affecting the increase of migration “hide” a series of arguments and personal motivations of the respondents interviewed in our research.

To this end, a quantitative research was carried out based on a questionnaire. 543 answers were collected and only 520 answers were considered valid and actually used in our research. The respondents are Romanian and are mainly based in Focsani (Vrancea County). The period of the research was September-November 2014.

According to our respondents, the most important **reasons** grounding the decision to migrate are:

- to improve their financial situation;
- to offer children a better future;
- the opportunity of a better social life;
- professional opportunities.

A series of correlations between the questions in the questionnaire were analyzed in the quantitative research conducted in September – November 2014:

- financial costs encountered by Romanian migrants in the countries of destination;
- economic costs of migration for the country of destination;
- social costs encountered by Romanian migrants in the countries of destination;
- negative effects of migration for the country of origin of the migrant;
- positive effects of migration for the country of destination of the migrant;

The most representative questions answered by the respondents from Focsani and which we considered relevant for our research refer to the main analyzed variables, respectively:

- Economic causes that contribute to the increase of migration and reasons for which you would migrate to another country;

• The country were the respondent would migrate and the criteria according to which the Romanians choose their country of destination.

The results were processed in SPSS and the parametric correlations between these variables are shown in Tables 4 and 5.

Starting from the main economic and social causes determining Romanians to migrate, a series of correlations have been made for the two questions used in the research, respectively: **reasons determining you to migrate to another country** and **the economic causes contributing to the increase of migration**, shown in the table below:

**Table 4 – Parametric correlations**

		Reasons for which you would migrate to another country	Economic causes contributing to the increase of migration
Reasons for which you would migrate to another country	<b>Correlation</b>	<b>1</b>	0,458
	<b>Pearson</b>	.	0,011*
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>		
	N	520	520
Economic causes contributing to the increase of migration	<b>Correlation</b>	<b>0,458</b>	1
	<b>Pearson</b>	<b>0,011*</b>	.
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>		
	N	520	520

Source: Personal SPSS processing

It can be noticed that the variable *reasons for which you would migrate to another country* has recorded a perfectly positive correlation, Pearson Correlation ( $r = 1.00$ ), which shows that the two variables influence each other.

For the second variable, the Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) is 0.458, meaning that there is a strong connection between the variables under analysis. The significance threshold is  $p$  (0.011), lower than the allowed value of 0.05, which means that there is a strong subjective conditioning between economic causes and reasons.

For an economic construal, most times the causes determining the migrant to migrate are subjective (related to purely psychological reasons of the individual), being mainly independent from the economic ones. Also, as aforementioned, individuals must be analyzed individually and objectively and not seen as a collectivity, preferably analyzed subjectively.

The main economic causes grounding the increase of migration are the following:

- high level of employment from various domain of activities;
- low income of population;
- deterioration of living conditions of population;
- existence of income differences on the labor market;
- absence of actual financial and professional opportunities;
- poverty from different regions of Romania;

How can the power of relatives already settled in another country affect the final decision of the “future migrant”? How much is the “future migrant” influenced by relatives? How much weighs his/her decision to migrate? And how much is his/her final decision influenced by relatives, families, friends, acquaintances?

The decision to migrate is not spontaneous and it is not made in a short term. It has been noticed, in the specialized literature, that the decision to migrate in a near future is taken on long term and is subjected to more factors:

- the family left home (children, parents, close relatives);
- the civil status of the migrants and involved individuals;
- age and professional training;
- professional situation and employment;
- financial situation of the family;
- existence of relatives or close friends in another country;

Official statistics has proven that the intention to migrate in another country is more acute for male migrants in comparison to female migrants.

Table 5 shows the correlations analyzed in our research between the two variables: the country where the migrant would migrate and the criteria according to which the Romanians choose their country of destination.

**Table 5 – Parametric correlations**

		The country where the migrant would migrate	Criteria according to which the Romanians choose their country of destination
The country where the migrant would migrate	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	<b>1</b>	0,143**
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	.	0,001
	N	520	520
Criteria according to which the Romanians choose their country of destination	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	<b>0,143**</b>	1
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	<b>0,001</b>	.
	N	520	520

Source: Personal SPSS processing

The Pearson coefficient ( $r = 1.0$ ) from Table 5 is 1, for the variable (the country where the migrant would migrate), which means that there is a positive connection between the two questions.

For the second variable (criteria according to which Romanians choose their country of destination), the Pearson coefficient ( $r$ ) is 0.143; this shows a very strong correlation.

The significance threshold ( $p$ ) is 0.001, lower than the accepted value 0.005, which shows a significant connection – very strong among the criteria grounding the choice of the country of destination.

The main criteria according to which the respondents would migrate are:

- accessibility of the language spoken in the country of destination;
- latin spirit of the country of destination;
- safe financial gaining;
- employment accessibility;
- presence of relatives, friends in the country of destination;
- economic stability of the country;
- real professional opportunities;

Most times, the criteria, according to which Romanians choose their country of destination; do not match 100% the preferences of the future migrant. The criteria are, most times, subjective and depend on the likings of the individual for the future country of destination. Female subjects have a higher level of criteria compared to male subjects.

In general, young people, aged 25-43, unmarried, high-school and higher education graduates are more likely to migrate. The employment market from Romania does not offer these people alternatives in finding employment in a short period of time.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

The respondents have declared that the improvement of their financial situation, a better future for their children, and the opportunity of a social life are the main reasons of the decision to migrate to a different country. In terms of economic reasons adding to the phenomenon of migration, we can list, according to the importance given by respondents: low income of population from various regions; deterioration of living conditions; poverty in different regions of the country; unemployment in different economy sectors; differences in salaries on the Romanian labor market, in particular in the poorest regions from Moldova (Bârlad, Suceava, Botosani).

Most times, the main causes of migration are subjective (they related to purely psychological reasons of the individual); these motivations are, most times, independent from the economic ones. Moreover, the individuals are analyzed individually and objectively and not taken collectively or according to the Diaspora to which they belong.

Migrants become, in time, a “real financial burden” for most of the countries of destination. These are forced to take legal action against migration flows from poorer countries.

The employment market can create workplaces relatively easy for high-school graduates, as they can integrate faster on the labor market compared to higher education graduates.

The more a country is more open to migrant, the more the living standards is higher in that country and, thus, there are more jobs unwanted by inhabitants and are taken by migrants with different degrees of education (high school, post-high school, university, post-university).

The main purpose of explaining the causes which determined or determine migration is essentially the significant income earned abroad and to transfer it into the country of origin; it has various destinations (personal expenses, small property investments and education of children left home).

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